Joint BA/MA in Computational Social Science

Department Website: http://macss.uchicago.edu

General Information

The Master of Arts in Computational Social Science (http://macss.uchicago.edu) (MACSS) is a two-year program of graduate study. It has a structured curriculum, with a total of 18 required and elective courses tailored to the disciplinary track a student follows. Students submit an article-length MA thesis in their second year, modeled on a professional journal article.

The program aims to produce leading social scientists in each of the core social science fields—economics, sociology, political science, psychology, history, and anthropology—producing competitive PhD applicants, well-trained in computational approaches, who have mastered the research and analytical skills necessary to make important contributions. MACSS also offers a concentration in economics, which is operated jointly with the Department of Economics. Students receive close mentorship from the program's Faculty Directors, academic staff, and members of our Executive and Affiliated Faculty to design a customized curriculum, define an area of scholarly research, and write an MA thesis.

They receive full professional support from the director of career services, with biweekly workshops, career planning, and employer recruitment.

Finally, all MA students may participate in an optional summer practicum between their first and second years, with internships drawn from academic and professional organizations. International students have three years of STEM work eligibility after they graduate.

Program Requirements and Coursework

General MACSS Curriculum

In their first year, all MA students will complete:

- The Computational Math Camp (MACS 33000) or the Econ Math Camp (ECON 30400), which run for three weeks in September.
- A Statistics placement exam, offered during Orientation Week.
- A three-course core in Perspectives (Perspectives on Computational Analysis, Perspectives on Computational Modeling, and Perspectives on Computational Research).
- A two-course core in Computer Science with Social Science Applications in the Autumn and Winter Quarters, and Large-Scale Computing for the Social Sciences in the Spring Quarter.
- Three graduate social science electives that will vary, depending on the student's prior training and intended disciplinary path.
- Minor exceptions: (1) students who do not place out on the Statistics exam will take an introductory course in computational statistics instead of a social science elective in the Autumn Quarter; (2) students may take more advanced programming instead of the two courses in Computer Science with Social Science Applications if they place out on a Computer Science placement exam.

In their second year, all MA students will complete:

- Three advanced courses in computational methods, drawn from any graduate department or professional school of the University.
- Three graduate social science electives.
- Three graduate courses that the student may select, from any University of Chicago department or professional school, where the student meets the minimum prerequisites.
- Students may register for the MA Research Commitment up to three times and use this as elective credit. This option allows students to allocate more time to their MA thesis.

Outside of their coursework, all MA students are expected to attend our weekly Computation Workshop, where advanced scholars and invited guests present drafts of their research for critique and discussion.

MACSS-Econ Curriculum

In their first year, all MACSS-Econ students will complete:

- Computational Math Camp (MACS 33000), which will run for three weeks in September.
- Computing Fundamentals Boot Camp (MACS 30120), which will also run for three weeks in September.
- A Statistics placement exam, offered during Orientation Week.
- A Computer Science placement exam, offered during Orientation Week.
- A two-course core in Perspectives on Computational Analysis and Computational Modeling, the first of which must be taken in Autumn Quarter.

- A three-course core in Foundations of Quantitative Analysis. (Up to two courses may be waived via the Statistics placement exam.)

  In their second AND/OR first year, all MACSS-Econ students will complete:

- Econ Math Camp (ECON 30400), which will run for three weeks in September.
- A three-course core in Computer Science with Social Science Applications. (Up to two courses may be waived via the Computer Science placement exam.)
- Two courses to satisfy the Foundations in Economic Theory requirement.
- Two courses to satisfy the Foundations in Empirical Analysis/Computational Methods requirement.
- Six graduate economics/computational methods electives that will vary depending on the student's prior training and intended disciplinary path. (This number may increase if the student earns placement on the Computer Science or Statistics exams.)
- Students may register once for the MA Research Commitment and use this as an elective credit. This option allows students to allocate more time to their MA thesis.

Outside of their coursework, all MA students are expected to attend our weekly Computation Workshop, where advanced scholars and invited guests present drafts of their research for critique and discussion.

Admission

Students who wish to pursue a joint BA/MA degree should consult first with their College adviser and then with the assistant dean of students (Lindsey Weglarz, lweglarz@uchicago.edu) in the Autumn Quarter of their third year.

Please see the BA/MA Program page (https://macss.uchicago.edu/content/bama-program/) to review our eligibility requirements for the BA/MA.

Any questions about the MA in Computational Social Science can be directed to the managing director (Chad Cyrenne, c-cyrenne@uchicago.edu).

Application Requirements

- Applicants are expected to have a GPA of 3.55 or higher.
- Applications are due by February 1.
- The application (https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/) is submitted online to the dean of students of the Division of the Social Sciences. (See apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply (https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/).)
- BA/MA applicants should not pay the application fee. Email admissions@ssd.uchicago.edu (admissions@ssd.uchicago.edu?subject=Fee%20Waiver%20BA%2FMA%20Dual%20Degree%20Program) to ask how to receive the fee waiver.
- GRE scores are not required.
- Prospective BA/MA students are expected to complete all of their general education requirements and all but three of their BA requirements before they begin the BA/MA program in the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year.
- Up to three graduate courses can be used as electives in the undergraduate program or can be applied to the undergraduate major, by petition to the director of undergraduate studies.
- Students in the BA/MA program are charged tuition at graduate rates in their fourth year. They retain whatever aid has been provided in the College. In their fifth year, students are eligible for an award of one-half tuition if they achieve a 3.4 GPA over their first nine courses.
- Students may walk and receive the BA in June of their fourth year if they wish to graduate with other members of their College class.
- All other requirements for the MA degree are identical.

How to Apply

The Application for Admission and Financial Aid, with instructions and deadlines, is available online at apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply (https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/).

Any questions about MACSS can be directed to our Student Affairs Administrator (Sabrina Biggus (sbiggus@uchicago.edu?subject=re:%20BA/MA%20inquiry%20(MACSS))).

Please also visit the Master of Arts in Computational Social Science website at macss.uchicago.edu (https://macss.uchicago.edu/).

❖ ❖ ❖